

REMARKS:

In the Office Action the Examiner noted that claims 1, 3-11, 13, and 14 are pending in the application, and the Examiner rejected all claims.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, and 14 have been amended. No new matter has been presented. Claims 2 and 12 remain cancelled.

Thus, claims 1, 3-11, 13, and 14 are pending in the application. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below, and reconsideration of all rejected claims is respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC §102:

In item 6 on page 3 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claims 1-11, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,205,478 (Sugano). The Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections of the remaining claims.

The outstanding Office Action indicates that the text of the claims does not require a subset of recipients to be notified (see, page 2 of outstanding Office Action). See also discussion at last paragraph on page 3.

Claim 1 recites, "selecting a part of watcher clients of the first client as one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client" and "... replacing identifiers of all watcher clients with one or more identifiers of the selected identifier notification recipients." The Applicants respectfully submit that Sugano does not disclose or suggest at least this feature of claim 1. See also claims 10, 11, 13 and 14 reciting similar features.

It is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention clearly includes "selecting a part of watcher clients of the first client as one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client", which is in contrast to Sugano discussing a feature where the new identifier of the first client is notified to all recipients to which the UIO of the first client was sent in the past.

On page 4 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner implies that even the group corresponding to users in the network who have previously received a corresponding UIO is itself a subset of the entire group of users in the network [of] who have and have not received the corresponding UIO. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion for at least the

following reason.

As recited in claim 1, by way of example, the claimed invention selects "a part of watcher clients" which correspond to "the identifier notification recipients" to whom the first client's new identifier is transmitted. In other words, the "part of watcher clients" recitation in the claims of the present application is patentably distinguishable from the feature of sending an update notification to each of the user terminals when changes are made, as discussed in Sugano.

Therefore, Sugano does not disclose or suggest each and every element of the Applicants' claims. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the claims patentably distinguish over Sugano, and withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection is earnestly and respectfully solicited.

Absent improper hindsight, the record fails to provide the required evidence of a motivation for a person of ordinary skill in the art to perform a modification to Sugano to result in the claimed invention. Specifically, since Sugano discusses notification to all recipients, a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would not be motivated to incorporate the claimed "selecting of a part of the watcher clients", as taught by the claimed invention.

Claims depending from the independent claims include all of the features of that claim plus additional features which are not disclosed by Sugano.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from the independent claims are patentably distinguishable over Sugano. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, claim 6 recites, "associating the presence information with an access level, the access level limiting notification recipients of the presence information of the clients" and "a portion of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client is determined to be the identifier notification recipients based on the access level of each watcher client."

As illustrated by the features in claim 6, the claimed invention includes "selecting a part of watcher client" including based on "access level" to avoid, for example, unnecessary notification of the change (i.e., selective notification).

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously

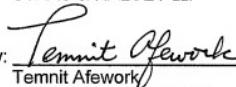
solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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